



**NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Sturgis, SD – Official Comment Regarding Municipal Incorporation of Buffalo Chip**

The City views a request of this nature to be of the utmost importance to the citizens of the City of Sturgis. The implications of having an incorporated municipality so close to the existing Sturgis City limits could have an adverse effect on the residents of Sturgis as well as the surrounding community. Without proper information being provided and adequate time being allowed to study critical information related to the request, the City could not support a request for Municipal Incorporation by any applicant.

In this case, there was no notice given to the members of the City Council which would have allowed a thorough examination of the information contained within the application. At no time did the petitioner provide any notice to the City, despite the City being a significant land owner nearly adjacent to the “new” City. The only notice provided to the City regarding the application was an e-mail dated February 10 which was sent to the City Manager and the City Attorney. The e-mail was a courtesy notice provided by a Commissioner and was delivered one day prior to the County Commission’s meeting which simply identified the application as a Public Hearing item on the February 12 agenda.

It would appear from the information provided on the County Board Docs website that the information items provided by the Petitioner were incomplete. When the City requested specific information related to the petition, they were told the County did not receive the information. In particular, the documents required by SDCL 9-3-4 were missing from the application. The missing information includes a survey, a map showing the area of the proposed incorporation, and census; all of which is to be available for public inspection. SDCL 9-3-5 furthermore specifies the applicant must also identify the type of government to be formed, the number of trustees, commissioners, or wards in the municipality, the boundaries and area according to the survey, and the resident population according to the census taken. All of which must be presented at the time indicated in the notice of the application or as soon thereafter as the board of county commissioners can receive and consider the application.



Other vital information affecting the City of Sturgis include how the new incorporation would provide for, a water system, sewer system and ground water protection plan, fire protection and other emergency services. The City currently provides resources for emergency response, including trained staff and equipment purchased by the residents of Sturgis, to the area proposed to be incorporated by the Buffalo Chip. To date, these vital services and how they will be supplied to a future City have not been explained by the Petitioner.

The Buffalo Chip is located between the City of Sturgis and other City owned facilities. Without the required map, it is unclear if the area is outside the three mile radius as state law mandates in SDCL 9-3-1.1. Additionally, the Meade County School Board voted in 2014 to petition the City of Sturgis for voluntary annexation of property located at the Sturgis Brown High School. That vote was reaffirmed in 2015 and on February 12, 2015, the Sturgis City Council approved the Petition for Voluntary Annexation of 461 acres of land currently being utilized to house the Sturgis Brown High School campus, related facilities and open space. The property is contiguous to the existing City limits and is well within the three-mile radius of the Buffalo Chip. The City currently provides secondary domestic water, sewer, street lighting, emergency services and snow removal to the annexation area. Garbage and other services will be available upon request by the School Board.

County Commissioner Robert Heidgerken spoke at a recent City Council meeting held on January 5. At that time he encouraged the City to consider developing a plan for annexation and zoning control along the corridor east of Sturgis. The Petitioner's action is entirely contrary to the comments made by the Commissioner and the recent history of cooperation between governmental agencies that has been building and which benefits all tax payers.

The City is hopeful that all the required information is provided for public review for 30 days as required by state law, prior to the County making a final decision on this application for incorporation.

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